

Food Box

Goals: to **AGGREGATE** products from producers or farmers (meat, vegetables, fruit, etc.) into a box that allows customers to have easy access to local and regional food. Boxes are typically offered on a **WEEKLY** basis for customer. This type of program allows for community members of in all income levels to enjoy fresh, healthy, regionally-sourced products at a retail rate. Food Boxes generally are delivered and packaged for work-site pickups or drop-off sites within major cities. Many programs are set-up for **ONLINE ORDERING** with the choice of various boxes; newsletters or recipes are then received via email or with the box each week. Many programs also offer an opportunity to customize the box each week for an upcharge which allows for customers to try new and unique options produced locally.

Benefits:

- Customers benefit from bulk buying
- Week-to-week purchases
- Regional and locally sourced food choices
- Numerous products to sample each week
- Multiple farms involved in program
- Assists families to access fresh, healthy food
- Creates access to top-quality food in an economically and time-efficient manner
- Creative business model
- Opportunity to train new local food leaders



Grow NYC Fresh Food Box: New York City, New York
<http://www.greenmarketco.org/>



Fresh Food Share: Detroit, Michigan
http://www.gcfb.org/site/PageServer?pagename=pg_freshfoodshare

Community Impact:

- In 2007, nearly 3,000 farmers sold \$16.5 million of local products direct to consumer; compared to 2,455 farmers who sold \$11.6 million in products in 2002
- Additional markets allow for job growth: A Leopold Center at Iowa State University evaluation found that 74 bulk food buyers that purchased \$8,934,126 of local food in 2012 also reported 36 new jobs related to food systems work
- Improve hunger: Detroit programs have started offering food boxes by gleaning under-used products: growing from offering 1 or 2 million pounds of food to over 28 million pounds, or 404,000 meals per month

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Case Study + Literature Review

GROWNYC FRESH FOOD BOX: New York City, New York: Started in 2011 to offer underserved community members an opportunity to purchase a variety of locally-sourced products with a flexible week-to-week schedule.

FRESH FOOD SHARE: Detroit, Michigan: A community-based food distribution system that offers fresh food at wholesale prices in individually packed boxes that are pre-ordered and delivered to a drop-site.

THE PRODUCE BOX: Raleigh, North Carolina: Food box program offered weekly with an assortment of products; money received from every box ordered goes into a grant program for North Carolina farmers, school programs and low-income produce boxes.

THE GOOD FOOD BOX: Toronto, Ontario, Canada: A non-profit that works to improve access to healthy, affordable food-offering a field-table experience through weekly box programs of multiple sizes and varieties.



The Produce Box: Raleigh, North Carolina
<http://www.theproducebox.com/how-it-works>

Best Management Practices:

- High-quality product
- Unique brand and aesthetic appeal
- Box choices for all income levels
- Purchasing policy for farming practices
- Flexible and responsive customer service
- Online pre-order system
- Customized boxes
- Give back to the community
- Nutritional and recipe guidance
- Establish work-site drop offs and coordinators



The Good Food Box: Toronto, Ontario
<http://www.foodshare.net/good-food-box/>

Things to Consider:

- What's the business plan?
- What type of products should be offered?
- Connect to the producers and farmers
 - How many products should be offered
 - What types of products
 - Fruits/vegetables/meat/packaged
- Build your box
- Where should the aggregation site be located?
- What work-sites would be interested?
- How many drop-sites are needed?
- What is the scaled-up model?

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Pilot Case Study

IOWA FOOD HUB FOOD BOX: Northeast Iowa

Offers food boxes that are packed with local and regional products and delivered to locations in the northeast area of Iowa. Seven different food boxes exist to order: Food Box with meat, veggies food box, meatless food box, veggie with bread box, weekly staples box, eggs only box, and university box. This type of ordering allows for customers to have variety and choose weekly boxes as they need.



Iowa Food Hub: Food Box Program, Decorah and West Union, Iowa
https://www.facebook.com/iowaFoodHub/photos_stream

LOCAL FOOD BOX PROGRAM: Des Moines

The Food Box program is a year-round, weekly box of locally grown food products. The box contains products purchased and aggregated from growers around the Des Moines area. For the pilot, there is one box option with a variety of products as well as newsletters and recipes with featured products. Boxes are delivered to worksites for pick up from employees. Local growers benefit from set prices, consistent orders, and exposure to new markets.



Eat Greater Des Moines: Des Moines Social Club aggregation site,
Des Moines, Iowa
Photo taken by ISU Community Design Lab

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